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## National Park Service News Release

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### **Above and Below the Waves: Coastal and Oceanic Treasures Conserved in the National Park System *National Park Service Announces Ocean Park Stewardship Strategy and Launch of Oceans Web Site***

(Washington, D.C.) --- Have you ever wanted to dive on a vibrant coral reef, witness the majesty of a towering glacier, or stroll along a remote barrier island? The National Park System offers opportunities to do all of those things and more. The American public has entrusted the National Park Service (NPS) with conserving a rich legacy of ocean wildlife and beautiful landscapes above and below the waves. National Parks contain more than 5,000 miles of beaches, coral reefs, kelp forests, wetlands, historic shipwrecks and forts, and other features that attract more than 76 million visitors every year.

The recently announced Ocean Park Stewardship Strategy is a comprehensive plan by the NPS for restoring and maintaining the ocean parks for current and future generations. In 74 parks spanning 25 coastal states and U.S. territories, people come to camp, fish, snorkel, scuba dive, boat, and watch wildlife. Our coastal and oceanic treasures can be found in areas as diverse as Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland, Kenai Fjords National Park in Alaska, Point Reyes National Seashore in California, Dry Tortugas National Park in Florida, Cape Lookout National Seashore in North Carolina, the National Park of American Samoa, Padre Island National Seashore in Texas, and Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in Wisconsin.

“I invite everyone to explore the wealth of coastal and oceanic resources conserved in the National Park System and learn about the Ocean Park Stewardship Strategy,” said Fran Mainella, Director of the National Park Service. “The National Park Service is proud to manage and conserve these jewels above and below the waves on behalf of the American people. The NPS Ocean Strategy is our part of the President’s U.S. Ocean Action Plan to restore and maintain productive fisheries, habitats, wildlife in the ocean parks, and ensure the recreational opportunities they afford to communities and visitors.”

In conjunction with the announcement of the Ocean Park Stewardship Strategy at Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland on August 25, 2005, the NPS has posted a web site to help visitors learn about recreational opportunities in the ocean parks and efforts to conserve coastal and oceanic treasures in the National Park System. By visiting the *Above and Below the Waves: Coastal and Oceanic Treasures Conserved in*

*the National Park System* website at: [http://www.nps.gov/pub\\_aff/oceans/conserve.htm](http://www.nps.gov/pub_aff/oceans/conserve.htm), people can learn of the many special places managed by the NPS that conserve coastal and oceanic treasures. In addition to a list of parks, the web site includes information and web links to the Ocean Park Stewardship Strategy, a Coastal Watershed Condition Assessment fact sheet, and documents and books related to the theme of coastal and oceanic treasures.

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.